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'Not a Mental Case,' Martha Says, Packing Her Bags

By CLARE CRAWFORD
and MINZOLA M'LENDON
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WASHINGTON — Martha Mitchell says she wants to set the record straight before she leaves town this week.

"I want to be sure my side is revealed and that people know I'm not sitting here as a mental case or an alcoholic," she said in an exclusive interview at her Watergate apartment here yesterday.

"I think it is rotten after all I have done for the Republican Party for them to cast aspersions on me."

MRS. MITCHELL talked freely about her ultimatum to her husband that he get out of politics last June. However, she would not discuss the alleged bugging of Democratic headquarters in one of the nearby buildings in the Watergate complex.

Republicans in high places have inferred that Mrs. Mitchell has had a nervous breakdown. Democrats, however, have sported "Free Martha" buttons, claiming she was silenced because she knows too much and has told what she knew in the past.

She added new details to her account yesterday of a melee in her hotel room in Newport, Calif., in June. She repeated that Steve King roughed her up. King is the new security chief for the Committee for the Re-election of the President which her husband, former Atty. Gen. John Mitchell, formerly headed.

Mrs. Mitchell said King grabbed the telephone from her and ripped it out of the wall while she was answering a question—about the Watergate bugging—from a newswoman.

SHE SAID HER left hand was cut when King "threw me into a window, smashing me into a glass." She displayed scars on her left hand—one on her middle finger, another on her ring finger. She said her ring finger, which had five stitches, may be permanently enlarged.

Mrs. Mitchell described her "imprisonment," which "was a most bizarre thing—it was worse than the Watergate caper." However, she would not elaborate on "the Watergate caper," the hip term for the bugging of the Democratic headquarters.

She said her hand bled all night and that when a doctor came the next morning he ignored the hand. He gave her an injection in the buttocks while King held her down, she said. Her hand continued to bleed, she said, and finally King took her to Newport Presbyterian Hospital for stitches.

She said she was given no food and was held incommunicado for 24 hours in the hotel. She said Lea Jablonsky, her secretary, did not help her during the scuffle.

MRS. MITCHELL obviously was delighted to be leaving Washington as she moved among packing boxes stacked six-feet high in her dining room. The Mitchells are moving to New York.

She was thinner and paler than in her last public appearances, in June. "I ought to be pale," she said wryly. "I can't even go on my balcony."

Asked if she intended to write a book about what she knows about Washington, she said: "You bet! I'm going to tell it all." And then she laughed.